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Bodhayana
The translation of part of the remains of the Ramayanam of Bodhayanam

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HANUMÁR.

R. A. Vardon, Oriental Lith. Press, Madras.

Rajput

The plaintive querulousness in the last line of the original is most admirable, when contrasted with the proud recapitulation of his power in the former part of the Stanza, and conveys forcibly to the heart the idea of dying weakness.

The following extracts are connected by prose in order to shorten the whole as much as possible, without omitting any thing essential to the action of the Episode, for such, with respect to the Rámà-yanam, the whole should be considered: the particulars contained therein are either not noticed by Válmikik or very differently related.

Rávanah, having, by stratagem, stolen Sitá from Rámah and his Brother Lacshmanah, conveyed her through the air to Lancá; as he bore her in his arms, the effulgence of her beauty, heightened by timidity and apprehension, so inflamed his passion, that, notwithstanding the promise he had made to his sister 'Súrpinacá (by whom he was instigated to the rape), to refrain from all attempts on her person, until he had obtained her own consent, he descended in a thick wood, in the midst of the island, to satisfy his desires—a wood whose horrors had never been penetrated by Man, Giant, or Demon.

"Still was the wood and not a sound was heard,
Save when the lonely raven croaked for food,
Or hum of distant bees, employed in toil,
Or insects sporting in the deathlike shade,
Hollow and low the mystic silence broke."

Here he took on himself (for he was, as yet, invisible to Sitá) the most beautiful form that ever clothed a human soul—a form that might have allured Rati from the arms of Manmadah, Rádhá from the embraces of Crishna—a form in which was united manly dignity and strength, with feminine grace and elegance.

"Sweet flowed his words, as from the waxen cell
The luscious store; his looks as soft as those
The meek eyed Dove casts on his tender mate,
While on his cheek burnt fierce the fire of love.

But he could not succeed: the Golden[1] Arrow from the hand of the Lord of the Soul (Atméswarah, Love) glowed in her breast, she knew the sacred bonds that indissolubly united her to Rámah, and the Queen of constancy (Veswásavati), refused even to permit the Lord of Lanca (Lank,éswarah), to speak of Love,—at length, vexed and enraged, Rávanah proceeded to violence.

——"Spoiler pause!"
Feebly behind a faltering voice exclaimed,
"If nature own thee for a Son, O pause!
Think on the dreadful ruin thou wilt make;
And in the bosom of a trembling maid,
Fear to implant a never dying thorn!"
Quick turned the king, his blood inflamed by wrath,
And sternly cast his anger gleaming eyes
To whence the sudden voice proceeding seemed:—
Hoary and white a rev'rend Sire appeared;
Coarse in an Ancr'ité's[2] homely vesture clad,
A staff of cane his time bent limbs sustained,
And bore the burthen of an age of years;
Spread o'er his breast, pure as the cotton down,
Below the cincture fell in curls distinct
The aged honors of his ample beard,
While few and scanty, scattered o'er his head,
Palsied and shaking, thro' extreme decay,
Flourished the silver blossoms of the grave[3].
Serene his countenance, his demeanor mild,
On him Angelic charity had stamped
Her truest image, and kind nature seemed

[1] The usual epithet of the arrows of the Indian Cupid is "*flowery*." Bód,hiyanah perhaps uses the word Golden, to express the pure connubial passion which inspired the breast of Sitá.

[2] Here follows a description of the vesture and paraphernalia of a Sanyásí, in which manner the old man was clothed; this I have omitted as irrelevent, and incompatible with our ideas of poetry. "The staff of cane" is a staff of bamboo, borne by reduse Penitents armed with a three-tined Fork, its name is Sólam.

[3] Lit. the white flowers of Death.

Him to have nourished with her sweetest milk:
No stern morosity, nor cynic frown,
The characters too oft impressed on age,
Jarred with the Godlike harmony that shone
Frequent in smiles, expressive on his face:
Yet his full eyes their youthful fire retained,
And glowed intense with ardour; mildly bright,
Their peircing glances seemed to search the soul.
In gentle accents, musical and mild:
Sweet as the drops that down the golden vase
Pellucid flowed, what time Vinitha's[1] Son
Bore from the Lord of Fire's protecting care,
The sacred, life sustaining Amrilt;
Regardless of the Monarch's ireful look,
The sage thus spoke. "O Thou, whoe'er thou art,
Let gentle mercy pour her soothing balm
Thro' all thy veins, and raise the prostrate maid,
Who trembles at thy feet! Let thy great mind
To spot thy high renown, thy goodly fame
For acts heroic and for warlike gests,
If high renown and goodly fame's thy boast,
By stains of infamy and base report,
With gen'rous pride, indignantly disdain!"
As glares the midnight wolf, that from the fold
Greedy of blood, a gentle lamb has borne,
And to the covert of some lonely glen,
His vainly bleating, fleecy prey conveyed,
When the keen shepherd breaks on his retreat,
And from his ruthless fangs the victim saves.
So looked the Monarch:—not the fiery glance
Of that fell serpent, whose envenomed eyes,
But by beholding, curdles all the blood,
And in the bloated veins the healthful tide
Of life congeals more dreadful ever shot.
Breathless he struggled long, the scorching heat
Of rage parched up his throat and him forbade
The vent of words and faculty of speech.
Kindled at length the smothered fire blazed out
And poured in wrathful torrents on the sire.
Humble and meek, serenely calm he stood,
Nor heeded not the frown, the trembling lip,
The threat'ning accents of the stern-eye'd king.
"Rash man and ill advised," the Tyrant said,
"Darest thou upon my private footsteps pry,
And strive by breath of empty words to change,
The strong determin'd purpose of my soul?
Begone intrusive wretch, lest I forget
Thy[2] sacred tribe, the silver of thy hairs,
And sheathe my sword impurpled in thy blood.
By all the names of heav'n no charm of speech
Shall calm my wrath, no soothing pray'r assuage
My kindled anger, nor my pity move,
If rashly daring yet thou lingerest here!"
Low to the earth the virtuous Muni bent:
As yields the passive reed before the storm,
When raging tempests swell by adverse winds,
And sweep impetuous thro' the racking sky,
Yet still opposes, still it's ground maintains,
And straighter lifts it's head from every blast
So did the Sire the Monarch's rage avoid,
Shun every gust, 'fore every blast recline;
But still forsook not Seta to her fate,
Resolved from lawless power to save the Queen.
"O Lord of Men, attend an Old Man's speech!"
Persuasive thus he formed the mild response,
"Nor spurn the warning voice and sacred truths
Of Sage experience: though celestial[3] might
Or strength Demoniac[3] every sinew firm
And steel with more than mortal[3] force the nerves
Yet still to wisdom's[3] voice puissant power
Should lend a thankful and attentive ear.
Ah then attend! if e'er thy bosom glowed
At tale of other's deeds, and names renowned,
Raised envy in thee to excel their acts!
If ever virtue in seraphic[4] notes
To thee her syren captivating song
Of glory deathless and immortal, sang,
Ah then attend!—Let not the sudden blast
Of passion, or the breath of base desire
The goodly fabric of an age o'erturn;
Nor honor's structure, rais'd with toil and care
In glorious pleasure's soft and idle hand,
To instant ruin and destruction hurl:
Fine is the veil that parts from lust impure
The noble holy feelings of the heart;
From those base passions that defile the breast,
The just affections that enlarge the soul,

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[1] Ganidah, his Mother Vinità and Cadrù, were both wives of Casyapah, one of the nine Prajapatih or Patriarchs. By the stratagems of the latter, Vinità had become her slave, and was commanded to procure the Amriitum for herself and race (the whole family of serpents). Vinità employed her son Ganidah to procure it, who took it by force from the keeping of Agnih, the God of Fire, and delivered it to Cadru—Indeah, however, recovered the Amriittum, before the serpents could taste it, but a few drops flowed down the side of the Chalix and fell on some Dharb,ha grass that was placed under it: this the serpents eagerly licked up, and ever since their tongues have been doubled.

[2] Rávanah, would perceive he was a Bráhman by his sacrificial cord and other circumstances.

[3] Déva balam, Divine power; Arura balam Demoniac power, Véru balam; human power; and Juyàna balam, the power of wisdom; they form a fine climax in the original, in which Juyúna balam holds the principal place. The climax I have not been able to retain in the Translation.

[4] Gand,harah.

And give his chief best energy to man.
Not with contention rude and brutal force,
Love, virtuous, heavenly, such as man may own,
Nor blush to cherish fervent in his breast,
Doth teach his chosen votary to woo,
But by the breath of eloquence to raise
And mild persuasive speech, within the bosom
Of the maid ador'd, a flame congenial,
Ardent and pure, as that his own avows.
Chaste, as the purest seraph's song, and mild,
As Orisons of meek-ey'd piety,
Silver and sweet the voice of love resounds;
Rough, hoarse and turbulent, as the madden'd sea,
By tempests vex'd and force of adverse winds,
Insults the passive sands, and threat'ning roars
Tremendous dreadful o'er the fright'ned beach,
His bold demands Desire rudely urges.
From Heav'n the one proceeds, confess'd a God,
An emanation from the great Supreme,
Who rules the perfect whole, from blackest Hell
And Stygian[1] caves, fiend like and foul: Désire,
With all the Demons in his train, ascends.
Love,[2] holy Love! the great primæval cause
Of all, celestial, universal Pow'r!
'Twas he who first the jarring atoms charm'd
And sooth'd them into rest; He spoke, and lo!
The utmost regions of disorder'd Chaos
Re-echoed, and the soothing strain obeyed,
Discord and Horror listen'd to his voice;
The uproar ceased; Peace spread her dovelike wings;
And all the warring elements were joined,
In bands of unison and sweet concord.
His fragrant breath breath'd thro' the sterile waste
And every rock with animation teemed;
Luxuriant and green the sands burst forth
With herbage; and the barren waters swarmed
With living myriads and uncouth forms.
Between his palms he moulded this fair orb,
And gave to Nature all her beauty, all
Her varied graces, all her nameless charms:
Lovely from his Creative hand she rose,
In smiles and virgin modesty adorned;
No low'ring frown deformed her placid brow,
But every feature beam'd with harmony,
And all her looks were looks of innocence:
Arrayed in native majesty she walked,
Nor needed ornamental help from art.
Long had she reign'd o'er our thrice happy world,
In this first state of Innocence and Joy,
And every age had been an age of truth,
But fell Desire, the foe professed of Love,
Of Order bland, of Peace, and Harmony,
The Virgin violated and defil'd."

Fain by instruction Rávanah to persuade,
In allegoric strains the Muni strove,
To render wisdom pleasant to his ear,
The flame of virtue in his breast allume,
And pour the balm of pity o'er his heart;
Intent, or to prolong her fate, or save
The child of sorrow from the hand of force.
"And, such the power of eloquence divine,
That, to his deep-fraught words, the furious king,
Gave due attention and observance calm.

The complaisance of Rávanah is not, however, of long continuance: the Muni uses a variety of arguments to prevail on him to desist, but to no purpose, and at length the fire of his wrath, is so strongly excited, that forgetful of his cast and apparent age and imbecility—

—— more raged the King, and raising high
The trembling spear, with all his force of nerve,
Hurled the unhallowed weapon at his heart.
As from the scaly monster of the flood,

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[1] Narcah.

[2] Abstract philosophical disquisitions do not assimilate with the spirit of English Poetry. I have, therefore, merely paraphrased Bód,hàyanah in this place. He loses himself in those mazes of metaphysical minutiæ wherein the Indians delight so much to wander—after explaining the difference between the Tri Gunàh (three qualities) essentially the same as in the Bhagavat Gità, though circumstantially very different; he says—"Before the Spirit which primævally moved the waters, felt an inclination to exert his creative energies by calling the Universe into existence, he possessed only the Satwa Gunam (*pure unimpassioned virtue*); previously to the commencement of this inclination, the Rajah Gunam (*Passion*) acceded to the former, and the conjunction produced Sak,hyam (*Love*), the fervour of the Sak,hyam increased by degrees, until at length the sacred fire burned so strongly in the divine wind, that the smoke and fume arising therefrom produced the Tama Gunam (*depravity—inclination to evil*), and then the Universe was created. The Tama Gunam prevailing at the period of the first creation, all the beings produced were supremely wicked; hence the existence of the Demons (Asuràh) and the origin of evil. But the violent lust of production, excited by the Tama Gunam, subsiding in the Divine mind, as the Satwa and Rajah Gunams gradually regained their influence, the Sak,hyam was restored to its full power, and all beings produced at the second period of creation were virtuous; hence the existence of the Gods (Suràh) and the origin of good. All creatures continued virtuous until the influence of the Tama Gunam again prevailing, corrupted and reduced them to their present state."

Though thrown with force gigantic, bounds
The pond'rous fragment, from the Muni's breast,
So glanced the missile steel; and wond'rous now
A[1] sudden change o'er all his form took place:
His Hermit's vestment shone with plates of gold,
And clasped his manly breast; his time-worn brows
Nodded with clustering plumes; the staff of cane,
Which erst could scarcely prop his tottering frame;
Shone in the sunbeams now a threatening brand.
O'er his broad shoulders rose his ample shield,
And at his side the sable buffalo roared.
Rais-d to the sky his mighty form appeared,
And at the terrors of his lightning eyes,
The heav'n-touched mountains sunk beneath the vales,
Confess'd he shone the potent king of Hell.
When on the royal beasts prescriptive haunts
The roaming tiger falls, and sudden sees,
Arous'd to vengeance, all his force prepared:
Aghast he stands—then steeling every nerve,
Rushes to meet the foe, and dares the fight:
Thus Rávan——

The personage concealed under the form and garb of a recluse Penitent, as above indicated, was Yamah, the king of Death and Hell—he has the guard of the southern region of the World committed to him, whence he issues on every occasion that requires his appearance, mounted on a black Buffalo; but as his presence is frequently necessary in the infernal realms to prevent the disturbance and confusion that continually breaks out among his unruly subjects, he has under him an army of Demons, called Kingcarâh, whom, during his absence in the Worlds below, he sends over the southern regions of the World to bring him immediate information of any occurrence that demands his interference. Some of these, passing over the wood in which Rávanah had alighted with Sitâ, (Lancâ is situated in the south) saw the danger which threatened the Queen, and as their swiftness is equal to that of the forked lightning, gave instant intimation of it to Yamah. The God who was apprehensive of the result of a contest with Dèsagrivah (*the ten headed*) took on himself the form before described—the result is known. The combat between the king of Lancâ and the king of Hell was tremendous—after relating the change in the appearance of Rávanah, who was obliged to resume his proper gigantic shape, in terms still more terrific than those descriptive of Yamah; the Poet proceeds.

Rude their encounter, terrible and fierce:
Fierce as the shock, when thro' the middle air,
Rushing impetuous, adverse demons meet,
And, while continual thunders shake the earth,
While storms on storms, slow rolling thro' the sky
And threat'ning ruin, terrify the World,
Enwrapt in clouds and murky darkness, hurl
The forked lightning.—Blows quick following blows,
Resounded thro' the troubled air and 'woke
The echoes of the wood to wildest uproar.

The Battle raged without intermission for seven days—the earth could not contain them and (by the magic power of Rávanah and the divine power of Yamah) the conflict was continued in the air: Rávanah being mounted in his flying Car, which moved by enchantment, and Yamah on his Buffalo. At length, Rávanah, who, on setting out on the expedition to seize Sitâ, had armed himself at all points,

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[1] Compare the former description of the Hermit on his first appearance, with the circumstances of his metamorphose, and observe the contrast.

THE COMBAT BETWEEN TAMAR AND RAVANAH.

"Rode their encounter, terrible and fierce."

lest he should be obliged to fight with Rámah or his brother, took the arrow called Parupadam, presented to him by 'Sivah, the force of which no power divine, demoniac, or human could resist, and threw it at Yamah;—the God fell headlong to the Earth.

On sounding pinions through the yielding air
When flies the terror[1] of the serpent tribes,
From the dark womb of sulphurious cloud
Sudden the rapid lightning darts, the stroke,
With force inevitable, to the earth
Headlong precipitates the soaring bird,
Mangled and scorched; thus Yamah wounded fell.
As, in Malaya's sandal scented groves,
When from the hunter's hand the barbed steel
The spotted monster gores, and, writhed with pain,
He tears enraged the blood impurpled ground,
And by the roar of horrid anguish wakes
The echoes of the rocks; thus death's great King
Infuriate raged, and, with so loud a voice,
Vengeance denounced upon the tyrant's head,
That, shrinking from their spheres, the planets fled
And struck with dread, the monsters of the waves
Plunged to the lowest regions of the deep,
Where ends Varunah's reign and Hell begins.[2]
And now he lifts on high the ebon[3] mace,
Whose mortal stroke none living can resist,
Which melts the marrow in the aching bones,
And in the livid veins congeals the tide
Of healthful life: which from the jewell'd throne
The powerful Monarch levels now in dust,
Or hurls the shrol clothed beggar to the grave.
Then had the Lord of Lanch felt its force
And Rámah's prowess ne'er been known to song:
Then had the dark decrees of fate, inscribed
On living adamant by him, who gave
Specific form to all that here exists,
Been contravened, and gifted Rávan died
By hands immortal: then had Brahmá's power,
His Holy promise, and his destined will,
Alike been ridiculed by gods and men,
The swan-borne god arose; swift as the dart
That springing from the insidious woodman's bow,
Pierces the tiger's side, he reached the Isle,
Where stood the power men tremble to behold,
Glancing red lightning from his angry eyes;
Grasp'd by each hand the fatal mace was raised
High o'er his head, and for the deadly blow
Each muscle of his giant form was strained.
Expectant of his fate, not fearing, sat
The car-borne king, disdaining coward flight,
If flight from rapid death could ought avail.
Thus when from high the falcon stoops to seize,
His long beaked prey, the fearless bird reclines
Supine upon the bosom of the air,
Watching th' impending stroke, and 'gainst the foe
Extends his long-bill like a warrior's spear[4]
When now confessed the Lord of Nature shone,
His four-fold face emmaing beams of light
As if four sunshad ris'n t'illume the World,[5]
The Lord of serpents reined his rage awhile,
And said; "O heavenly soul! Primaeval Lord!
If from the glories of Empyrean Heaven,
Me by thy mandates thou descend'st to bless,
When on the head of yon devoted wretch,
I've hurl'd the vengeance of an injured God,
'Tis mine alone to worship and obey."
Dissuasive Brahmá thus—"O king of Death,
Why gainst my offspring[6] whom the world revere,
Burns thus thy wrath? Withhold thy deadly hand,
Nor render vain, the ordinance of fate,
Which erst to suppliant Rávan's vows I gave,
By cruel penance, self-inflicted pain,
And tortures moved, which but to hear would freeze
The vital blood of man.—Thus I ordained—
'Thy fated life shall from demoniac might
And power divine be safe; by human strength,
If o'er thou fall'st in combat, shalt thou fall.'
Then O desist! on me and on my fame,
If at the gifted Lord of Lanch aimed,
Thy ebon weapon lights."—He ceas'd, and Death,
In remembrance of his fall by mortal hand
Still rankling in his breast, unyielding stood;
His dreadful eye flashed anger on the King
And high in air again he raised his mace:
Then Brahmá mildly thus——

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[1] The Garudah, which is said to feed on serpents; not the bird which is so common in most parts of India, and which we call the Braminy Kite, but a monster of the species, which is said really to exist in the hills, tho' probably seldom met with but in fables.

[2] The extravagance of the latter part of the passage will be pardoned for the sake of the former: it is carried much further in the original—the sudden disappearing of the stars terrifies the Gods, who rush through the portals of Heaven to discover the cause and the plunging of the fish into the roots of the ocean, causes so great a commotion in the world of nature, that all the ships sailing thereon at the time, are swallowed up.

[3] Calalen'dam, *The Black Club*: it is the cause of violent death, as the tears of Meiltyn Dévi is of natural Death.

[4] Like a Lance worn by the inhabitants of the hills, this is the principal weapon of that description of people to this day. I suppose the bird here meant is the crane, its name in Sanscrit is Longbeck.

[5] Another extravagance, Brahmá has four faces.

[6] Rávanah was a Brahmanah by the father's side.

Brahmà by a variety of arguments, at length prevails on Yamah to spare Rávanah, to which, however, the God very reluctantly consents; when his anger is allayed, he remembers the cause of dispute, Sità, whom he insists on restoring to Rámah;[1] this Rávanah obstinately opposes and again prepares for combat rather than permit it; the pacific interference, therefore, of Brahma is nearly rendered vain.

When rules the Lord of light the summer months,
When glow with heat intense the burning skies,
And, scarcely hidden, lurks the ready flame,
Impatient of restraint *to very bough*,
Thus, moved by ardent winds, the arid canes
Burst into flames, and midst the crackling woods
Dances the delighted deity of fire:
Anon, slow sailing through the burdened air,
Great Indrà's arm the pregnant clouds impel,
And angry Agni sees his flames dispersed,
When yet the wood is scarcely half consumed,
And slow and sullen, wrapped in smoke retires.
Scarce is he gone when Rávan's voice is heard;
And thro' the air, in wild commotion, troop
The Genii of the winds; the clouds recede;
The waters cease; encouraged Agni turns,
Plies all his powers, incites his busy train
Of fire-hair'd fiends, till all the woodland burns,
One irresistable, continuous blaze.
So once again the flame of passion raged;
Vain the sweet voice of eloquence divine,
And wisdom sacred precepts all in vain!
Again in Rávan's hand the weapon gleamed,
Threaten'd again the dreadful mace of Death.
His anger scarce th' Almighty could restrain,
As, frowning, thus he said; "Cease yet a while,
Impetuous spirits cease! Hear King of Death!
And for the fate of Sità fear no more!
Hear car-borne leader of the giant bands!
If e'er, unmindful of a female's tears,
Against her purity thou darest to raise
Th' unhallowed hand of force, the fire of Heav'n,
Swift darting from the vengeful clouds, shall fall
On thy devoted head, and, on the rock,
As by th' ungovernable tempest driven,
The bark is to ten thousand atoms crushed,
Shall strew in fragments round thy fractured skull."
He said—submissive bowed the Lord of Hell,
And hid in clouds, with all his demons sought,
In sullen majesty the southern realms.

Brahmà ascends to Heaven and Rávanah is left, under the restriction of the malediction against him, to carry off Sità—He descends and awakes Sità from the magic slumber into which he had thrown her at the commencement of the combat.

——— He raised her from the earth
And soothed her fears: still unassured she gazed
With eyes of wild intensity around.
And from the King, within whose arms she lay,
Convulsed with horror, trembling shrank aghast.
Like diamonds cased in yellow[2] ivory shone,
Her radiant eyes and here the glowing blush[3]
That on the bosom of the maiden burns,
Arising naked from the cleansing wave,
Whose unrobed form intrusive eyes have seen;
While, o'er her golden neck and heaving breasts,
In wild confusion spread her raven[4] hair:
Those breasts on which the formless, God of Love,
Absorbed in sweetest extacy performed,
Delightful penance![5]

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[1] The whole of the Battle of Death with Rávanah, bears a resemblance to the conflict of Satan with Death at the Gates of Hell and the interference of Brahmà to that of Sin: so much indeed, that had Bód,hàyanah written in the Yavanda Dialect (Greek) he would have been considered as the prototype of Milton.

[2] The complexion of Sità was yellow or golden, the word of Swarnam occurs so often in this Stanza that it was with difficulty I avoided that repetition so disagreeable in English Poetry, but so beautiful in alleterative versification.

[3] Lajja Ractam—the redness of shame.

[4] Lit. the colour of a black bee.

[5] This last thought is perhaps equal to any in the Poem; the words in the original are—Nirvid yèsay ad Asramam, Savitamsh fwàn taj Jayajàd,huna—Patàli twad Uroja 'Snila Nelayè tal pama 'Satà Yati.—The Poet addresses Sita. "Resolved now to conquer him (*Rávanah*) who has no material body (*the God of Love*) becoming *a reclase Penitent*, absorbed in contemplation, took his station on thee, and fixed his house of leaves on the place where the leafy marks are impressed between the mountains of thy breast." It is customary to impress marks of leaves and flowers between the breasts of Cshatriya women, recluses reside in small houses of leaves frequently in mountainous situation; penances are often performed to enable a person to obtain victory over his enemies; hence the allusions in this Stanza, but there, though just and simple, I could not have rendered it intelligible to an English Reader, and I, therefore, have retained only the general idea—this will serve as a specimen of my mode of Translation throughout.

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And hid in clouds, with all his demons sought,
In sullen majesty the southern realms.

Brahmà ascends to Heaven and Rávannh is left, under the restriction of the malediction against him, to carry off Sità—He descends and awakes Sità from the magic slumber into which he had thrown her at the commencement of the combat.

—— He raised her from the earth
And soothed her fears: still unassured she gazed
With eyes of wild insanity around,
And from the King, within whose arms she lay,
Convulsed with horror, trembling shrank aghast.
Like diamonds cased in yellow[2] ivory shone,
Her radiant eyes and hers the glowing blush[3]
That on the bosom of the maiden burns,
Arising naked from the cleansing wave,
Whose unrobed form intrusive eyes have seen;
While, o'er her golden neck and heaving breasts,
In wild confusion spread her raven[4] hair:
Those breasts on which the formless, God of Love,
Absorbed in sweetest extacy performed,
Delightful penance![5]

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[1] The whole of the Battle of Death with Rávannh, bears a resemblance to the conflict of Satan with Death at the Gates of Hell and the interference of Brahmà to that of Sin: so much indeed, that had Bód,hàyannh written in the Yavanda Dialect (Greek) he would have been considered as the prototype of Milton.

[2] The complexion of Sità was yellow or golden, the word of Swannam occurs so often in this Stanza that it was with difficulty I avoided that repetition so disagreeable in English Poetry, but so beautiful in alleterative versification.

[3] Lajja Rectam—the redness of shame.

[4] Lit. the colour of a black bee.

[5] This last thought is perhaps equal to any in the Poem; the words in the original are—Nirvid yàsray ad Asanam, Savitannh twàn taj Jayyàd,huna—Patnîî twad Uruja 'Sobha Nekyà tal pana 'Satà Yati.—The Poet addresses Sita. "Resolved now to conquer him (*Rávannh*) who has no material body (*the God of Love*) becoming *a reclose Penitent*, absorbed in contemplation, took his station on thee, and fixed his house of leaves on the place where the leafy marks are impressed between the mountains of thy breast." It is customary to impress marks of leaves and flowers between the breasts of Cshatriya women, recluses reside in small houses of leaves frequently in mountainous situation; penances are often performed to enable a person to obtain victory over his enemies; hence the allusions in this Stanza, but there, though just and simple, I could not have rendered intelligible to an English Reader, and I, therefore, have retained only the general idea—this will serve as a specimen of my mode of Translation throughout.

Rávanah conveys Sità to the city of Lanca and delivers her to the care of his niece Trijatà :—here the action ends, and here ends, also, the remains of Bód,háyanah.

The interference of Yamah and subsequent circumstances are not in Valmikik who attributes the curse, said by Bód,hàyanah, to be pronounced by Brahmà to another person, and a former period. Rávanah, he says, by the power he possessed of conveying himself whither he pleased (*Cámu Charu*, see the second of the Stanzas from Bód,hàyanah in the original) entered Heaven and seeing Ramb,hà, the most beautiful of the Celestial Nymphs, fell violently in love with her, but, as she was attached to Nala Cúbarah, the son of his brother Cúbarah, (*the God of Wealth,*) she refused to listen to him, and he, therefore, ravished her. Here it is remarkable that Ramb,hà uses almost the same dissuasive arguments, as the disguised Yamah in the foregoing translation. When her lover, Nala Cúbarah was informed of what had happened, he cursed Rávanah, in the words which Bód,hàyanah attributes to Brahmà. Thus the same circumstance, though differently told by the two Poets, is made the Palladium of the chastity of Sità: notwithstanding which, she insists on passing through the fiery ordeal after the conquest of Lanca, to convince Rámah of her purity.

APPENDIX

TO THE

TRANSLATION OF BOD,HAYANAH.

I CANNOT forbear repeating the Note, marked 2, in Page 5, in order to compare it with the following passages from Sanchoniathon and Aristophanes, which have just met my eye. The Philosophy of Bód,hàyanah may be considered as the *Epicurian* system of India; it differs both from the Vedánta and Sid,hánta, or Theological and Rational systems, in many respects (perhaps it may be characterized as an union of both) and appears to be that which first spread from India into Egypt, Asia proper, Greece and Italy; which produced at an early period, the Theogony and latterly the Poem of Lucretius—I shall give the Greek of Aristophanes to enable a more correct comparison being made.

BOD,HAYANAH.

Before the Spirit, which primæval*ly moved on the troubled waters* felt an inclination to exert his creative energies by calling the Universe into existence, he possessed only the Satwa Gunam (*the quality of unimpassioned virtue*); previously to the commencement of this inclination, the Rájs Gunam *the quality of passion*), acceded to the former, and the conjunction produced Sak,hyam (*Love*), the favor of the Sak,hyam increased by degrees until at length the sacred fire burned so strongly in the divine mind, that the smoke and fume arising therefrom produced the Tama Gunam *(the quality of depravity,)* and the Universe was created—hence the origin of evil at the first period of creation; the Tama Gunam subsiding, Love again prevailed, hence the origin of good at the second period of creation.

SANCHONIATHON.

The principle of the Universe was a dark and windy air, or a wind formed of dark air, and a *turbulent evening chaos:* when this wind *fell in love* with its own principles, and a mixture was made, that mixture was called *Desire or Cupid;* from whence came all the seed of this building and the generation of the Universe.

ARISTOPHANES.

Χάος ἦν καὶ Νὺξ, Ἔρεβός τε μέλαν πρῶτον, καὶ τάρ]αρος εὐρύς.
Γῆ', οὐδ' ἀὴρ, οὐδ' οὐρανὸς ἦν. Ἐρέβους δ' ἐν ἀ πείρατ κόλπους
Τίκ]ει πρώτιστον ὑπηνέμιον νὺξ ᾠὸν μελανόπτερος.
Ἐξ οὗ περιπ]λομένοις ὥραις ἔθλαστεν Ἔρως ὁ ποθεινός,
Στίλβων νῶτον ὠ]ρίγαιν χρυσαῖν, εἰκὼς ἀνεμόεσσι δίναις.
Οὗ]ος δὲ χάει ω]ρόεντ]ι μιγεὶς νυκτὶ, κατὰ τάρταρον εὐρὺν
Ἐνεσ]σεύατο γένος ἡμέτερον, καὶ πρῶτον ἀνήγαγεν εἰς φῶς.
Πρότερον δ' οὐκ ἦν γένος ἀθανάτων, πρὶν Ἔρως συνέμιξεν ἅπαντ]α,

In the beginning existed Chaos, and Night, and Black Hell, and wide extended Tartarus.
There was neither Earth, nor Air, nor Sky :—In the vast bosom of Hell
Black pinioned Night laid the primæval windy Egg.
From which, in due season, was hatched desire-exciting Love,
Resplendent, as to his shoulders, with golden wings and resembling an ungovernable whirlpool:
He, uniting with rapid nocturnal Chaos, in extended Tartarus
Created our race and brought them into light ;—
For the Gods did not primævally exist, *but* Love mixt together *and produced* all things.

In these three passages the leading thoughts are the same ; they indicate the existence of a primæval Chaos, and the production of the Universe from it by *Love*. Besides the Chaos, Bódhayanah and Sanchoniathon, mention only an actuating principle : but Aristophanes has besides three distinct beings, Night, Hell, and Tartarus, respecting whose functions he is very indistinct. But how clear, how simple, how beautiful is the exposition of the Indian in comparison with the unintelligible mysticism of the Phœnician or the extravagant rant of the Grecian. God, says he, existed a pure and placid spirit, involved in himself and actuated by no extraneous objects—this I understand to be indicated by the *Satwa Gunam* —besides himself there was nothing but a broad expanse of troubled Waters. The Chaos or perhaps the ὑγρὸς τορπαρ of the Greeks—on this the *spirit of God moved*—" The Earth was without form and void, and darkness was on the face of the deep : and the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters"—at length it was his Divine will to assume to himself feeling and passion, by the conjunction of which with Virtue was produced Love or affection. The latter by the social principles of its nature, could not exist alone, and by its energies, therefore, the world was Created; evil from affection having degenerated into self-love, by restriction to one object, and good from its being extended to many. The whole of this is clear, the deductions logical ; and the reasoning, if not founded on an intimate knowledge of Divine, is at least compatible with human nature. Sanchoniathon, hearing, but not understanding, the foregoing on some similar passage of Indian Philosophy, says the spirit of God was a " dark and windy air," which preposterously " falls in *love* with its own principles," and makes a mixture, but of what does not appear, except it be of itself and the Chaos, for nothing else exists of which to make one ; by this mixture Cupid, or *Love* is produced : Love then is both the cause and effect, actuating the dark wind in the first instance and originating from that very actuation. The last sentence, in which, by a jumble of Metaphors, the building of the Universe is said to spring from the seed of Love, is a suitable climax to the whole. The Greek is more reasonable and connected, but black pinioned Night laying an Egg in the bosom of Hell, from which Love with golden wings is hatched, conveys the idea of a black hen hatching a little, callow, yellow-wingd Chicken, and by no means suits the sublimity of the subject, nor the magnificence of the corresponding thoughts : he makes Chaos, also, though for what reason I know not, take an active part in the Creation, and like Sanchoniathon involves the whole in a mist of obscurity. The last part of the last verse, is almost in the very words of Bódhàyanah. Arist.—κρὶν Ἔρως συνῴκισεν. Bó.—He (Love) moukled in his hands and gave a form to the Ball of the earth —only that the Greeks set before the mind the image of an apothecary *mixing up* (συνὶ μῶν) drugs in a mortar.

On the whole it is evident that the conceptions in the three passages are the same : that the first is conspicuous for the propriety of its deductions, and the clearness of its expressions : that the second and third are obscured by that veil of mystery in which Ignorance always delights to envelope herself: that the former, from the terms in which it is conveyed degenerates almost to nonsense, and that the latter is disgraced by low and trivial conceits. The inference is that the Indian is the source whence the others have proceeded, but that, by the imperfection of the channels, by which the Philosophy of India reached Greece and Asia, it has degenerated from its original perfection, and shines dimly through the mystery and quaintness of Sanchoniathon and Aristophanes.

I never saw the passage from Sanchoniathon in the original, and am not prepared to contend for his authenticity, though I should be very much inclined to do so were it necessary. Aristophanes I admit, is only a Comic writer, and therefore not a criterion of Helleman Philosophy, but it should be remembered, that he lived in the time of Herodotus, Socrates, and Plato; when the former had displayed to his countrymen the tenets of the Egyptians and Assyrians the second had explained, and the latter had written commentaries on them; his Philosophy, therefore, is an epitome of the prevalent opinions of the times:—that he indeed "held the Mirror up to Nature and shewed the very body of the times, its form and pleasure"—is plain, from the story told by somebody, of Plato's sending his works to Dionysus, to inform him of the manner of Athens, and his Comedy of the Birds, whence the foregoing extract it should be remembered was written in a more dignified occasion than most of his works, to persuade his countrymen to fortify Decelcum against the inroads of the Peloponnesians into Attica.